



MASONIC DEPARTMENT

Secretaries will kindly examine the names of the respective officers in the cards and send corrections, if required, to the Masonic Department of the Tribune. The Masonic Directory is published every Sunday.

TWO WIDOWS.

AN ITALIAN BRUNETTE AND A TEUTONIC ELODIE.

The one terror of every secretary is the "widow," whether poor and in need or otherwise. It is always hard to please them and to fit to the lodge. I have had my own troubles with the dear creatures—I mean, of course, Masonically. Yes, surely they have troubled me—all ages, all sizes, all colors; even from all nationalities they came to bother me when I held office in lodge or chapter; with husbands and without them; it did not matter to them how long their departed idol had been stricken from the roll of membership; they held some receipt or card, or some communication signed by the secretary, and, therefore, this was evidence enough for them that they in some way had a "claim," and I must do something for them.

I remember one in particular, who obtained my address in the Grand Secretary's office, and called upon me for assistance. She claimed to be the widow of Bro. Giovanni De La Vergne. Now, I knew this brother and his wife very well, and remembered the latter as a very decided brunette, with coal-black eyes and hair, an olive complexion and unmistakable Italian in speech and manners, while this present madame was fair, blue eyes, fair hair, and decidedly Teutonic in appearance.

Bro. Giovanni De La Vergne was an Italian by birth, and a performer by profession. His consuming ambition was to rival the then famous Signor Blodini, and Bro. De La Vergne initiated successfully his protégé in almost everything the celebrated rope-walker did. He crossed Niagara Falls with a wheelbarrow and stove, baking pancakes and eating them on his way over, and many other breakneck acrobatic feats which at the time astonished a young world.

He was proposed in our lodge, claiming a residence in this city. He spoke about a dozen different languages, all of them more or less broken. I often thought if he could only manage to mend or stick some of them broken and fragmentary idioms together, at least a decent English might be thus obtained. However, we managed to teach him enough of the ritual in English so as to make himself known as a Mason, and as to signs and grips, anybody to whom Brother Giovanni ever gave a grip could not possibly entertain any doubt, at least as to zeal and strength of purpose, of his grip; for when he got your hand in his big, brawny and sinewy claws, you would swear to almost anything to be released from such vise-like grip. He was very impulsive, and Masonry "took" with him. It had taken deep root, and when he met a brother or shook hands, his paws would close on the victim, like an anaconda, until every drop of blood seemed to disappear. He would then launch forth an avalanche of questions and greetings at you, and in quick succession would come a piece of Italian, Spanish or German, intermixed with the frequent question, "Dem is so? Hey! Out!" Does you like so, hey?"

Brother Giovanni De La Vergne had made arrangements to travel through the Western States, with his wife, and before leaving the city he wanted to do something for the Lodge. So it was arranged that we have a picnic, afternoon and evening festival, etc., in one of the numerous "woods" up town, and that the brother and his family were to give an exhibition on a rope stretched across the trees. We advertised the affair extensively, and it was a great success financially. We got up a little gold medal to present to our acrobatic brother. This was done one lodge night in the presence of a large gathering of brethren and visitors. The W. Master called the brother up to the East, and in a neat speech with a few impressive remarks, presented him the medal. Bro. De La Vergne was at first surprised and overcome, but soon recovered his usual assurance and volubility, and was most impulsive nature and dangerous manner of his action. He had, however, finally kissed the medal, and, sinking upon his knees, he swore in all the broken portions of the several languages known to him, never avar and avar to grieve this precious

time to the presentation.

After the presentation, he insisted that we accompany him to his hotel and partake of refreshments.

Here Gadams, his agent, who was a woman of great accomplishments, spoke a faultless English, performed as well on the piano as the ropes, sang beautifully, and entertained us greatly.

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The pair traveled on south, after they travelled to the United States, Mexico and South America, but never returned to England again.

Several times I received letters from her, dated at various places—Venezia, Valparaiso, Brazil, etc., written by the accomplished lady, she apologized for him for not writing on the score of business engagements and other details.

A long time ago, he had nothing at all from our acrobatic family, his dues had run up to a considerable sum, and several times his name came up for action, but in remembrance of the rope, sang beautifully, and entertained us greatly.

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A companion of the Lodge of Perfection of New York City was held on the 6th inst. The fourteenth degree was conferred in full ceremonial form. It was the first degree worked by the Thrice Potent Grand Master William Harkness, and was highly appreciated by the large number of illustrious brethren present. The easy manner, careful and studious work and pleasing address were remarkable, and befitting for him a prosperous future. The degree was conferred by Illustrious William Harkness, and she calmly asked me or the lodge to assist her, first in finding a place, and then to assist her, second, to import to her some of our signs, etc., as this would be of great help to her while travelling, both of which I politely but firmly declined to do, as I knew that I thought she wanted some funds for her sufficient for her immediate wants, and that while I sincerely sympathized with her at the loss of her boy, her husband, I could not interfere, as far as to aid her in her present difficulty, and if we could reach her trustful husband, we would be very willing to see him mounted on a mule and sent to him.

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